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Letter dated 11 July 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to the understanding reached during the Security Council's wrap-up session held on 30 May 2003 under the Pakistan presidency, on "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security" (see S/PV.4766), I have the honour to transmit the summary (see annex) of the suggestions made in the course of the wrap-up discussions. The summary has been prepared on our own responsibility, but we have consulted the Council members before submitting it.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and the enclosed summary as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Masood **Khalid**
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Annex to the letter dated 11 July 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the month of May 2003

Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security

The Security Council, in a wrap-up session on 30 May 2003, held a wide-ranging discussion on "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security". The primary objective of the discussion, as outlined by the Presidency (Pakistan), was to have a strategic, continent-wide look at the United Nations involvement with Africa (the Presidency's non-paper is attached). Council members and the larger United Nations membership analysed the inter-State and intra-State conflicts and complex crises in Africa with a view to exploring ways and means, including the Security Council missions, and other possible mechanisms within the United Nations system, to promote durable solutions and peace and stability in the African continent.

New and important suggestions — general and specific — made during the Council's discussion are summarized below.

General

- The regional and global dimensions of African conflicts must be taken fully into account in order to find lasting solutions.
- Political will to take the necessary decisions and follow-up action remains the key to efforts to assist in resolving current conflicts in Africa and preventing new ones from occurring.
- The primary responsibility for the restoration of peace rests with the parties to the conflicts. Ultimately, the solutions must come from the parties themselves. They cannot be imposed from outside.
- African ownership of the process remains a must. The countries concerned have to take responsibility and demand accountability for the implementation of peace agreements and the establishment of effective peacekeeping measures.
- The "partnership" of the Security Council with African regional and subregional organizations is very important. Cooperation and consultation with the African Union, ECOWAS and other structures must be deepened to facilitate the maintenance of peace and security in the continent.
- The Security Council has to back up regional initiatives with both political and financial support.
- African capabilities in the fields of conflict prevention, management and resolution must be strengthened.

- Greater balance and harmony between regional efforts and Council action for conflict prevention and settlement must be ensured. At times, the assessment of the Council and the African institutions did not coincide.

- The Security Council must carefully follow up on the implementation of its own decisions and resolutions. It should ensure that agreements that are concluded are adhered to by the parties concerned.

- The gap between the decisions/recommendations and their implementation is a matter of concern. A more rigorous assessment of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution is required to make them more implementable and action-friendly by the United Nations system, especially the Security Council.

- The Security Council should occasionally carry out an evaluation of its own actions with regard to the ongoing and increasingly complicated African conflicts in order to lay out the real problems and explore new avenues for most favourable solutions.

Security Council missions

- Security Council missions should become effective instruments for conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution.

- Security Council missions should inter alia be employed as tools for preventive diplomatic action. In potential conflict situations, the missions could contribute significantly to defusing tensions before the eruption of hostilities and could usefully complement the preventive diplomacy of the Secretary-General.

- Lessons learned from previous experiences should be effectively applied. Each mission should build upon the previous one and make progress on the basis of what has taken place before.

- Multidisciplinary United Nations expert support should be used in the preparatory and follow-up stages of the missions to potential or actual conflict areas.

- Proper coordination and consultation with the African Union and other subregional organizations in preparation for the missions should be ensured.

- During the visits to actual or potential areas of conflict, the Security Council should develop sustainable contacts with major stakeholders or parties on the ground. The missions should give priority to calling for the respect for and implementation of the political agreements and ceasefires that have already been signed.

- Given the regional dimensions of all African conflicts, the Security Council mission to Central Africa should sound out the idea of the adoption of declarations of good-neighbourliness, which could then be transformed into a good-neighbourliness pact. Work on such a document would promote mutual understanding, help resolve problems, and strengthen trust between States.

- The findings and recommendations of Security Council missions should become a consistent and integral part of the Council's decision-making process.

- Security Council, missions should be undertaken on a more regular basis in the future.

- After the two missions to Africa this year, thematic discussions on the following may be considered in order to promote greater coherence of action by the United Nations system as a whole:

  – the rule of law and the promotion of internal security and human rights

  – minimum conditions for holding credible elections

  – security sector reform

  – measures to enhance transparency and accountability in the management of State wealth and resources

  – strengthening State authority through the civil service and legislatures

  – enhancing the capacity of regional organizations to undertake peace operations.

Conflict prevention

- The United Nations should develop an integrated, holistic and comprehensive approach to act effectively to prevent and contain conflicts before they break out and before they have claimed victims and displaced civilian populations.

- Preventive measures having the prospects of success must be designed and implemented through active collaboration with and support from subregional and regional organizations.

- An effective early warning system should be devised, through the work of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and United Nations offices, under the guidance of the Security Council, in cooperation and coordination with the African Union and other regional organizations and actors concerned.

- Conflict prevention involves not only the prudent use of the measures at the disposal of the Security Council, but also efforts to promote development strategies and support poverty eradication measures.

- Among the international community's endeavours for prevention, efforts for education would over the long run yield the best results in establishing conditions of peace, stability, understanding and harmony in Africa.

- Appropriate and effective mechanisms and institutions, including good governance and the rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and addressing fundamental inequities, are of great importance for the early prevention of conflicts and a durable peace in the continent.

Addressing the root causes

- There is a need for the Security Council — and the United Nations in general — to seriously and systematically address the root causes of conflict in ways that could minimize the potential for future and more protracted conflict and instability on the African continent.

- Analysis of Africa's conflicts must be approached from the perspective of regional dimensions that explain their root causes. This must be done in

dialogue and consultation with regional organizations, political leaders and members of civil society.

- Dealing with issues such as socio-economic inequities and inequalities, systematic ethnic discrimination, the denial of human rights, disputes over political participation or long-standing grievances over land, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons and the illegal exploitation of natural resources is of critical importance in the process of moving from conflict management to prevention and final resolution.

- The recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa need to be put into effect.

- Poverty eradication must remain the overarching priority. The Council should attach importance to the implementation inter alia of the Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Consensus and the conclusion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg.

Illegal exploitation of resources

- Efforts should be made to put an end to the illegal exploitation of natural resources of African countries that fuels conflicts in the continent.

- There is a need to follow up on the measures proposed by the Panel of Experts with respect to the illegal exploitation of natural resources.

- An intensive dialogue with Governments and political leaders is necessary. Where dialogue fails, international pressure on Governments, companies and individuals must be the next step. The reports of panels of experts, as in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, led to positive results, because Governments have taken action and companies have been encouraged to review their policies.

Proliferation of small arms and light weapons

- The Council must make efforts to stop the trafficking of small arms and light weapons, which have the effect of actual weapons of mass destruction.

- The proliferation and illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons must be tackled effectively through the strengthening of monitoring mechanisms and capabilities of States.

- Neighbouring countries must cooperate and muster the political will to stop the flow of weapons and military materiel to belligerents. If failure to do so is due to lack of capabilities, then those have to be strengthened.

- The flow of weapons on the supply side must also be contained. The United Nations weapons register could be an important tool. International arms dealers should be effectively dealt with.

Illegal armed groups

- There is a need to tackle the difficult issue of armed groups from neighbouring countries that cross borders to foment violence and defy appeals to return to their countries of origin.

- Combating mercenary activities, which are developing at an alarming rate in West Africa, must not be overlooked.

- Quite frequently armed groups are manipulated from abroad and become an extension of the interests of regional neighbouring countries. The phenomenon has become regional and poses a threat to international peace and security. Governments must engage in contacts with armed groups and make compromises within the framework of an intra-national dialogue.

- The question of border security requires a fresh approach. The permeability and vulnerability of borders has in many cases been the reason for the spill-over of conflict situations. The Council missions to Africa should draw attention to this problem.

Sanctions

- Sanctions regimes, by restricting access to the arms and the financing used to undermine international security, can be a valuable tool in minimizing threats. The goal is not to punish, but to use sanctions to change the policies of regimes that threaten their neighbours.

- When properly applied and monitored, sanctions can be an important tool for generating compliance with internationally accepted norms, leading to the resolution of conflicts.

- There should be greater cooperation and consultation between the various ad hoc working groups on Africa in the United Nations system and the sanctions committees.

- The panels of experts established by the Council in the cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia are working effectively to monitor and improve the implementation of the sanctions regime. The Council members have to see how the findings and recommendations of the panels of experts can be used effectively.

- The Council should review the role of sanctions in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

- The mission to West Africa would enable the Council to see to what extent its sanctions regimes have been effective in the case of certain States of the region.

- The Council's sanctions could be targeted and can be made more effective to ensure implementation of the Council's decisions and adherence to agreements reached.

Peacekeeping operations

- Peacekeeping is an important instrument at the disposal of the Security Council. The Council must avoid selectivity and double standards in establishing United Nations peacekeeping operations.

- The Council must continue to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. Supporting the peace process in Africa necessarily requires strengthening peacekeeping missions.

- The Council should adapt the mandates of peacekeeping operations to the changing conflict situations in Africa.

- Peacekeeping operations must have a robust mandate and adequate financial resources.

- Helping Africans to build capacity for peace operations is essential. In most cases, they have the human resources and a tradition of peacekeeping, but not the logistics or the financial resources to mount large-scale peacekeeping operations on the continent. Members of the Council, in a cooperative partnership, can provide resources for regional peacekeeping.

- The Security Council should authorize the participation of countries affected by conflict, United Nations actors and others in the preparation, expansion and renewal of the mandates of United Nations missions.

- The efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for the enhancement of the capabilities of troop contributors and in capacity-building for regional and subregional operations should continue. An active role for the United Nations, specifically in the areas of information-sharing, promoting transparency, mobilizing support and stimulating contacts between recipients and donors of assistance in training, equipment and logistics is a welcome step.

- Strong commitment and continued and sustained support in terms of manpower, financing and material for United Nations Member States is essential for the operational success of peacekeeping operations. The Security Council and the Secretariat should make every effort to engage Member States, particularly troop-contributing countries, at the planning stage and at every subsequent phase of any particular operation.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

- The two Security Council missions to Africa this year should consider the desirability of setting up a comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme for the whole continent. Such a programme must be comprehensive and must enable former combatants to be reintegrated into normal day-to-day life and economic activities.

- There is a need for the United Nations and donor countries to provide appropriate, substantial assistance with a view to the stabilization and subsequent improvement of the situation. There is a need, in particular, to help in the implementation of peace and ceasefire agreements when they have been signed, and to support the various programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants.

- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in Africa should draw upon the success of earlier such programmes elsewhere and have regional participation in view of the interlinkage and interdependence of conflicts in Africa.

Humanitarian and human rights dimension

- Solutions of African conflicts must encompass humanitarian action and respect for international law.

- The Council's political support for conflict resolution should be accompanied by an improvement in the economic and humanitarian situation.
- Support for conflict resolution and prevention is well served by respect for international human rights and humanitarian norms, as well as a commitment to good governance.
- The humanitarian situation is an integral part of conflicts and not a subsidiary or auxiliary one. It is essential for humanitarian questions to play a central role in the resolution phase of conflicts because the complex crises occurring in Africa dramatically affect civilian populations.
- Denial of access to humanitarian organizations by warring factions is unacceptable.
- The Council must also address the question of responsibility for violations of human rights in the resolution phase of a conflict. Impunity must be deemed unacceptable. Parties to the conflicts must get the clear message that those who commit crimes against humanity will inexorably be brought to justice.
- Consideration should be given to creating adequate mechanisms to ensure progress on reconciliation, which is one of the greatest challenges for countries emerging from conflict.
- In the post-conflict phase, consideration should also be given to providing required political and financial support for addressing the questions inter alia of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Peace and development

- Recognizing the vital linkage between peace and security and the broader objectives of sustainable development, countries of the African Union have forged a common vision and a shared commitment to a path of sustainable growth and development. Efforts to advance the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Declaration's pledge to Africa are under way. The Security Council remains an important partner in this noble endeavour.
- NEPAD contains mutually-reinforcing measures that allow for the creation of socio-political inclusion, development and peace. NEPAD also offers new opportunities regarding development assistance. Resources to support NEPAD could be usefully channelled through multilateral institutions to foster triangular as well as South-South cooperation.
- Greater investment by States with economic capacity would benefit not only African populations but also the developed world.
- Poverty and extreme underdevelopment underpin the Council's discussion. Much bloodshed could be prevented and money saved if developed countries spearheaded a programme aimed at intervening economically, providing appropriate technical experts, monitoring economic decisions, generating investments and opening wide their doors to exports.
- There is a need to put the maintenance of peace and security on a sound economic and financial footing. Insufficient funding during peace processes remains a difficult problem. Economic and financial guarantees, therefore,

represent a serious issue for the Security Council in its task of preventing and managing and forestalling the recurrence of conflicts in Africa.

- There is a lack of donor commitment and a failure to meet peace-building commitments in countries emerging from conflicts. Ongoing financial assistance to regional organizations and other actors is crucial in enabling them to carry out the difficult operations in the various regions and countries.

Other United Nations mechanisms

- The Secretary-General, his Special Representatives, and the Groups of Friends should continue to play their useful facilitating roles.

Intra-United Nations coordination

- Greater coordination and coherence must be fostered in the United Nations response at the intergovernmental level to the interrelated issues of peace, security and sustainable development in Africa.
- The Security Council must tackle Africa's problems in a creative process of cooperation and "partnership" with the other bodies of the United Nations.
- The working relationship already developed between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council should be strengthened.
- The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa created by the Security Council and the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict formed under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council represent a new mechanism that will potentially lead to a more comprehensive approach to addressing conflict situations.
- The Security Council and the Economic and Social Council may consider holding joint meetings periodically as a way of mobilizing international support for Africa in the areas of conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict peace-building.
- More joint missions of the Security Council and Economic and Social Council may be sent to countries like Guinea-Bissau and Burundi.
- The Member States, the Organization itself, the international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations, the international donor community and civil society groups have a shared responsibility for devising and implementing successful strategies in Africa.
- The expansion and strengthening of coordination between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council should be backed up by the effective involvement and support of international financial organizations. A comprehensive and integrated approach towards African issues and better coordination in that regard within the United Nations system, involving the principal organs — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat — United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, should therefore be the urgent priorities.

New mechanisms

- The Council could create inquiry bodies to establish the facts in the case of certain crises. Such bodies could work along the lines of the Counter-Terrorism Committee to trace the resources and to chase the money trail back to those who finance and fuel conflicts in various parts of Africa.

- It is crucial for the United Nations to enhance coordination and complementarity in the work of its three principal organs in order to create durable solutions by generating a coherent and mutually supportive response to the African problems and complex crises. A way to do this could be to build on the existing cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and to establish ad hoc composite committees, with membership drawn from the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Such composite committees could generate a coherent and mutually supportive response to the internecine conflicts and complex crises in Africa and, perhaps, elsewhere. Such composite committees could look at complex emergencies from different perspectives and thus generate coherent solutions. This approach would also reduce the burden on the Security Council, which is increasingly finding itself preoccupied with internal political, economic and development issues in various conflict situations.

Attachment

Wrap-up session, 30 May 2003

Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security

Introduction

The Security Council, consistent with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has devoted considerable time and effort to respond to the aspirations of the peoples of Africa and to address the threats to peace and security on the continent. The collective efforts of the international community in support of the African struggle against colonialism were singularly successful in bringing about the political independence of all the countries of Africa.

In more recent times, international efforts, especially those of the United Nations system and organs, have been devoted to the search for similar successes and progress in the areas of peace and security as well as political and economic development. These efforts have resulted in some notable advancements and success in the mitigation of some of the conflict situations. However, challenges remain. Inter-State and intra-State conflicts and complex crises continue to plague parts of the continent and, in some instances, there has been resurgence of old conflicts that were previously considered to have been contained. Poverty, food insecurity and disease compound the crises. There is also a worrisome indication that some of the internal conflicts are increasingly becoming regional, with internal conflict situations in one country affecting a number of other countries in the region.

The human suffering resulting from conflicts and socio-economic breakdown is of serious concern to the international community. The international community, working with African countries and subregional and regional organizations, needs to review how best to promote peace and security in Africa and thus enable its peoples to achieve their full potential.

United Nations engagement

The inter-State and intra-State conflicts in Africa have frequently evoked the Security Council's direct involvement. Such involvement has expanded in scope and content, especially in recent years. The Council's actions have included authorizing peacekeeping missions, imposing sanctions, especially evolving the use of "smart sanctions" with more biting consequences for those who violate Security Council resolutions, managing conflicts as well as supporting efforts for conflict resolution inter alia by regional and subregional organizations.

Through the use of the good offices of the Secretary-General in conflict prevention and management and such mechanisms as the peacekeeping and peace-building missions, as well as the activities of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Groups of Friends, and working in close consultation with regional and subregional organizations and civil society groups, the United Nations engagement with Africa has been growing at multiple levels. Cooperation between the different organs of the United Nations, such as the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, is increasing, in particular to assist countries emerging from conflict by expanding coordination between the peace and security as

well as the development organs of the United Nations to increase the effectiveness of United Nations support. The Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa is an important forum to help keep an institutional focus on African issues. Lately, the Security Council missions to Africa have emerged as another important means for the Council to directly engage with the regional and subregional organizations, governmental, opposition and civil society actors in Africa and to facilitate the process of conflict management and resolution. These missions improve the appreciation of the Council members of the situations on the ground, and help to expand access to the United Nations decision-making organ for a wider range of actors, who otherwise would not have an opportunity to have their opinion considered.

In June 2003, two separate Security Council missions will be visiting Central Africa and West Africa. These missions underscore the place of prominence that the African continent has on the agenda of the Security Council. The dispatch of the two missions should be a powerful signal to all parties to the conflicts in Africa that the Council intends to maintain its focus on African issues and will remain actively engaged with Africa.

Scope of discussion

The Pakistan Presidency considers that, on the eve of the two missions to Africa, the Security Council could devote its meeting on 30 May 2003 to taking another strategic, continent-wide look at the United Nations involvement with Africa. The Presidency proposes that the Council's discussion focus on the following:

- The forthcoming missions to Central Africa and West Africa.
- The conflict situations requiring urgent international action, especially focusing on the regionalization of some of the intra-State conflicts.
- The efficacy of the mechanisms currently employed by the United Nations for engagement with Africa.
- The imperative of moving from conflict "management" to "prevention" and final resolution, to prevent the resurgence of old conflicts.
- Further ways and means to deepen engagement with the African continent, especially focusing on how to deploy substantive material as well as political support to resolve conflict, and especially in support of the subregional and regional organizations.
- The desirability of a comprehensive and integrated approach to African issues by the United Nations system, hinging on closer coordination between the different organs of the United Nations.

Format

It is proposed that the Council's meeting on this subject be a public meeting, open to the participation of other States Members of the United Nations.

The leaders of the two forthcoming Security Council missions to Africa could be invited to initiate the discussion.

Other interested parties, such as the Chairmen of the Working Group on Africa and the Group of African States, as well as a representative of the African Union, may be invited to speak.

In the Council's debate, two Council members could speak followed by two non-members.

Participants would be requested to keep their statements to a maximum of five minutes.

The Presidency, on its own responsibility, will prepare a summary of important and new suggestions advanced during the Council's debate and will circulate it subsequently.